



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

PUBLICATION

Marine Planning Stakeholder Reference Group meeting: 17 May 2023

Minutes of the Marine Planning Stakeholder Reference Group meeting of 17 May 2023.

First published: 20 June 2023

Last updated: 20 June 2023

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Contents

Attendees

1. Welcome and update on marine planning
2. Taking forward Marine Planning following the 3 year review of the WNMP – Introduction
3. RSBP report – Powering Healthy Seas
4. NRW - Mapping ecosystem restoration opportunities
5. Any other business and next meeting

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Attendees

Eluned Jones (Chair), Elen King & Sarah Bound (Welsh Government), **Adrian Judd & Charlotte Brill** (Cefas), **Helen Bloomfield & Lucie Skates** (NRW), **Stephen Jay** (Liverpool University), **Dr Julian Wainwright** (RCAHMMW), **Thomas Fey & Emma Thorpe** (JNCC), **Katie Havard-Smith** (Severn Estuary Partnership), **Mike Butterfield** (RYA), **Rebecca Williams** (TCE), **Stephen Thompson** (MEW), **Francesco Sandrelli & Elise Nyborg** (UK CoS), **Emily Williams** (RSPB), **Kam Tang** (Swansea University), **Rhys Ambrose** (ESCA), **Mark Simmonds** (British Ports), **Neville Rookes** (WLGA), **Chloe Wenman** (MCS).

1. Welcome and update on marine planning

Eluned welcomed the group which included a number of new members. Elen King has joined the Welsh Government Marine Planning Team and will be leading on Marine Planning implementation. Charlotte Brill has joined CEFAS and will be leading on cross border marine planning on behalf of Welsh Government.

Eluned introduced:

Paper 1 - Overview of marine planning products:

A directory of current and developing marine planning documents and tools which was circulated with the agenda prior to the meeting.

2. Taking forward Marine Planning following the 3

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year review of the WNMP – Introduction

Eluned signposted the Group to a **Ministerial Written Statement** published on 1 March 2023 on taking forward Marine Planning following the three year review of the Welsh National Marine Plan (WNMP). The Written Statement reflects on the first three years of the WNMP's implementation and updates on priorities for taking forward marine planning and continuing the implementation of the WNMP. These include developing planning tools to enable an increasingly spatial and prescriptive approach, building on work undertaken to date, including:

- Welsh National Marine Plan policy
- Sector Locational Guidance
- mapping environmental considerations and sensitivities in relation to specific sectors
- Marine Planning Technical Statements
- mapping of Strategic Resource Areas.

Eluned noted that Welsh Government hopes to work with the Group on the next steps in taking forward marine planning.

Members commented that it was encouraging to see good progress being made.

The need for market analysis was discussed; Eluned advised that industry members will be presenting at the next MPSRG meeting on 28 June 2023 on related work they're currently taking forward and highlighting key priorities and considerations.

An exercise to collate all targets associated with relevant ministerial ambitions and legislative commitments was suggested.

The presentation slides were circulated via email on 25 May 2023.

3. RSBP report – Powering Healthy Seas

Chloe Wenman from MCS and Emily Williams from RSPB presented the joint research report “**Powering Healthy Seas**” which was published in Autumn 2022. The report brings together experts in conservation and wind energy to look at how the UK can live up to its offshore wind commitments and protect our natural world.

Lucie queried the nature of The Crown Estate’s role in the hierarchical planning framework advocated by the report, noting they already provide planning for offshore wind and other sectors. Emily and Chloe responded saying they would hope for a clear role for The Crown Estate, which they noted is not subject to the same duties and commitments as central government. Rebecca advised that The Crown Estate will be presenting at the next MPSRG meeting on work which is being undertaken looking holistically at the whole seabed and how this can support marine planning.

The presentation slides were circulated via email on 25 May 2023.

4. NRW - Mapping ecosystem restoration opportunities

Helen Bloomfield from NRW presented “Mapping ecosystem restoration opportunities”. The purpose of the mapping is to:

- help communicate NRW’s position on where and what the most significant opportunities are to enhance the resilience of the marine ecosystems in Wales and where further evidence is required to underpin ecosystem enhancement
- engage partners to agree, influence and work collaboratively to deliver

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restoration and enhancement activities and develop funding mechanisms.

Katie asked if the mapping work would be completed for all sites across the MPA network, including cross border sites. Helen advised it would take place where there were condition assessments, and she would be back in touch to confirm.

5. Any other business and next meeting

Kam asked how the Wales Coasts and Seas Partnership (CaSP) and the MPSRG work together. Eluned advised the CaSP is an overarching marine group for Welsh Government, operating at a high level across different parts of marine policy, i.e., biodiversity, conservation and ecosystem restoration. They have a clear focus around funding, ocean literacy and blue growth. The MPSRG is an expert advisory working group on marine planning, with opportunities for more detailed input and time and space for discussions.

Stephen shared a link to a current call for research funding.

Next meeting – 28 June 2023

Queries to: marineplanning@gov.wales

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